



DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

INFORMATION SERVICE

OFFICE OF FISHERY COORDINATION

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For Immediate Release

Given adequate labor and equipment, Alaska's vast fishing waters could furnish an estimated salmon pack of 6 to 6½ million cases in 1943, Harold L. Ickes, Fishery Coordinator, said today. This compares with a '42 pack of 5,015,375 cases, indicating an increase of 20 to 30 percent is possible.

"The greater potential yield would result directly from wise conservation measures evolved by the Fish and Wildlife Service and practiced in Alaska over a period of years," according to the Coordinator. "But the Alaska salmon industry, the most important of its kind in the world, faces many problems during the coming season."

Chief among these problems, it was pointed out, are the taking of tenders and other floating equipment by the war agencies and the lack of an adequate labor supply. These factors would seriously curtail the pack in Bristol Bay and along the Alaska Peninsula, reducing the pack as much as 1,000,000 to 1,500,000 cases, or even eliminating it entirely. This pack is largely red salmon, the most desirable grade. Although a fair pack of salmon was taken last year, much of it never reached grocery shelves, and salmon for civilians is scarce. It is a valued Army, Navy and export food.

The probable pack for all of Alaska will lie between the two extremes, with the total dependent in the last analysis upon the availability of temporary labor and transportation in the spring and summer months.

"If personnel and equipment can be secured," said the Coordinator, "I do not know where more protein food suitable for use anywhere in the world can be obtained for the same expenditure of manpower and material. The Office of Fishery Coordination intends to exert every effort to obtain the maximum pack under the abnormal conditions produced by the war as one contribution of this Department to the War food program."